


## PRACTICE MANAGEMENT 1

Perception Management  
Business Planning

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### WHAT IS PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT?

- Managing impressions
  - First impressions are very important
  - Every impression builds on the last
- Moments of contact
  - Face-to-face
  - Distance
  - Brand
  - Word of Mouth




### THE MESSAGE DECISION - BARRIERS

- Emotional
  - **Trust** - Am I willing to let this person touch me?
- Intellectual
  - **Value** – Is the benefit worth the money/time?
- If either of these factors are unfavorable, the client will not book a massage.




### BUILDING TRUST FROM A DISTANCE

- Welcoming note with confirmation card & map
- Send
  - Intake form and policy form
  - How to prepare for your first massage
  - Brochure/newsletter/articles re: benefits
  - Coupon for a free gift with their first massage
- Courtesy call the day before, and ask if they have any questions




### BUILDING TRUST – FACE-TO-FACE

- ✗ Consider all senses
- ✗ Clean, comfortable clothes that are coherent with your image & target market
- ✗ Smile, stand tall, radiate confidence, be relaxed
- ✗ Make good eye contact
- ✗ Make physical contact early
- ✗ Set and meet client expectations
- ✗ Be consistent – Do what you say you will do



### VALUE

- What is the value of a massage?
- Customer value =  
Perceived value of service – cost of service
- How can we increase customer value?



### ESTABLISHING VALUE

- What universal needs do human beings have?
- How can massage and bodywork meet those needs?
- Which needs are you attracted to meeting?
- Who is your competition who already meets these needs?
- What are those needs worth to your potential clients?

(Roseberry, 2007)

### ESTABLISHING VALUE EXERCISE

1. Add any client needs that are not on the form
2. ✓ - You can meet right now
3. Need - You would enjoy meeting
4. T - You would need additional training
5. ~~Need~~ - You have no interest in meeting

Are there any themes that you can identify?

### ESTABLISHING VALUE

- 3 factors create value in your client's mind
  - Self-confidence in skills and abilities
  - Communication skills
  - Hands-on skills
- Building self-confidence
  - Knowledge of value of ability

### CLIENT SATISFACTION

- Satisfaction = Expectations met
- Delight = Expectations exceeded
- Dissatisfaction = ?
- "Underpromise, overdeliver" (anon)

### SETTING & MEETING EXPECTATIONS

- What does your client expect?
  - Particular result
  - Relaxation / Sports / Deep tissue / Trigger point
  - Attitude & approach of therapist
  - Anticipated feelings during and after the session
  - Ambience of the setting
- You need to know if you are to fulfil their needs

### SETTING & MEETING EXPECTATIONS

- If you are unable to achieve the expected result
  - Explain
  - Refer
- If you are able to achieve the expected result
  - Throughout the massage explain to your client how the work that you're doing is meeting their needs

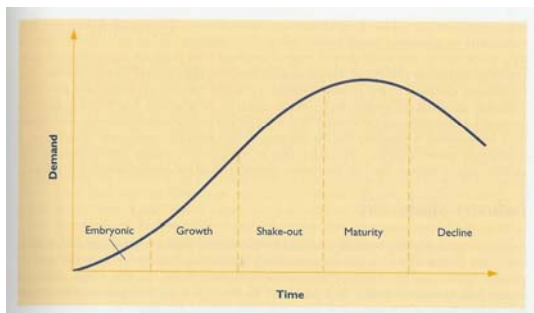
### SETTING & MEETING EXPECTATIONS

- Expectation of massage application
  - No pain, no gain
  - Myofascial release
- Shifting expectations
  - Meet the client first
  - Education is key

### SETTING AND MEETING EXPECTATIONS

- Approach of the therapist
  - Attend to the client
  - One of the deepest desires people have is the desire to be listened to
  - "Is there anything your last therapist did...?"

### MARKETING IN A GROWTH INDUSTRY



(Hill, Jones, Galvin, 2004)

### MARKETING IN A GROWTH INDUSTRY

- Your biggest competition is not other therapists
- It is ignorance.
- Marketing focus
  - Education
  - Benefits and values of massage

### THE PERCEPTION CONTINUUM

1. Not aware of massage
2. Aware of massage – misconceptions
3. Aware of massage – doesn't see value
4. Willing to get massage but confused
5. Open to massage, gets one occasionally
6. Regular massage – 1 practitioner
7. Regular massage – many bodyworkers

### LEVEL 2 - MISCONCEPTIONS

- Helgas
- Harlots
- Hippies
- Fluff 'n Buff
- How to handle this type of client
- Undo negative stereotypes and educate them

### LEVEL 3 – DOESN'T SEE VALUE

- Most people think massage = relaxation / luxury
- How to handle this type of client
  - Emphasize benefits of massage
  - Avoid talking about title, modalities, styles of work
    - Confusing & irrelevant

### LEVEL 4 – WILLING, BUT CONFUSED

- Interested, but haven't had a massage yet, or are not committed to a local practitioner
- Confused about
  - Quality – How do you know who is good?
  - Qualifications – What do they mean?
  - Modality – Which is best for them?
- How do you handle this type of client?
  - Listen for their need & offer to meet it.


### LEVEL 5 – GETS MESSAGES SOMETIMES

- On the hunt for a good massage therapist
- May have had a bad experience
  - Bruising
  - Lack of professionalism
  - Boundary issues
  - Superficial relaxation massage
- How to handle this type of client
  - Listen & ensure that you meet their needs

### LEVEL 6 & 7 – GETS MESSAGE REGULARLY

- Savvy consumers, who know what they want
- How do I deal with this type of customer?
  - High quality service
  - Professionalism
  - Differentiation

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### PLANNING

- "A business that fails to plan, plans to fail" (anon.)
- Benefits of planning
  - Clarifies
    - What you want
    - Who your customers are likely to be
    - If your plan is realistic or viable
  - Facilitates financing

## CREATING A BUSINESS PLAN

- A business plan is an overview of what you're doing and where you're going
- Business Plan
  - Executive Summary
  - Background
  - Business Advisors
  - Business Environment
  - Relevant business achievements
  - Other relevant topics

## PLANNING CYCLES

- Planning should not just happen once
- Concept plan
- Long-term / Mid-term / Short-term
 

5+ yrs	1 yr	3 mths
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- Review goals & coherence

## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

- How do you respond to challenges?
- Can you step out of your comfort zone?
- Read Roseberry p 97-107 & complete the exercise *Managing Common Fears*

## GETTING YOUR PRACTICE STARTED

- Talk to anyone within 10 feet of you about massage until you get 10 clients (10 x 10 rule)
  - Conversation starters
    - So what do you do for a living?
    - T-shirt with Massage on it
- Leverage your contacts – ask your friends, family & other contacts to hand out cards

## PRACTICE OPENING PARTY

- Invite everyone you know
- Send out written invitations and include business cards
- Handout stacks of cards at your party and ask people to distribute them to people they know
- Competition – First person to get you 3 clients gets a free massage
- Hand out gift certificates

## SOURCES

### Bibliography

- Roseberry, M. (2007). *Marketing Massage – From First Job to Dream Practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> e.d). New York: Thomson Delmar Learning.

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- Household debt (2008). Retrieved 11 June, 2008 from <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/keygraphs/fig5.html>